

NEWS IN BRIEF

Joint committee to probe schoolgirls' poisonings:
Iran MP

Social Desk

A senior Iranian lawmaker said a fact-finding committee consisting of representatives of Parliament and the government traveled to the holy city of Qom on Monday to investigate the poisoning of schoolgirls. Ahmad Amirabadi told ICANA News that the committee seeks to "find a clear answer" about the cause of the poisonings.

Since late November, hundreds of cases of respiratory poisoning have been reported among schoolgirls in Qom and the western city of Borujerd, with some needing hospital treatment. Last week, Prosecutor General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri ordered a judicial probe into the incidents.

On Monday, Deputy Judiciary Chief Mohammad Mossaddeq said the prosecutor of Qom had "seriously" investigated the issue but had failed to achieve a result.

Jalal Rashidi, the chairman of the parliamentary committee on internal security, said the "serial poisonings" had been "intentional" and "directed from abroad".

A deputy governor of Lorestan Province, where Borujerd is located, told IRNA on Monday that a "more thorough investigation" is required after some students at two girls' schools in the city were poisoned.

Scientists boost efficiency of a cheap solar panel material by 250%

SCIENCE ALERT - In a new study, scientists have been able to significantly improve the efficiency of a particular type of this material, known as a lead-halide perovskite. By combining the perovskite with a substrate of metal rather than glass, light conversion efficiency was increased by 250 percent.

20 countries want Iran's medicine and medical equipment



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Currently there are 20 countries that have asked Iran to provide them with medicine and medical equipment, announced Iran's minister of health.

"Also, Syria and Iraq have accepted our Pharmacopoeia (a book containing directions for the identification of compound medicines)," said Bahram Einollahi, according to IRNA.

On the sidelines of the first fair of knowledge-based products in the field of food, medicine, and medical equipment, held in

Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla, the minister added, "The health care field of our country is one of our major achievements and it has brought us many honors in the world."

Einollahi noted that before the Islamic Revolution, Iran was completely dependent on the West, adding, "Unqualified doctors were practicing in Iran and many patients were sent abroad for treatment."

According to the minister of health, the total number of Iran's medical students was

180,000, and the country was completely dependent on the West in terms of pharmaceuticals, whereas after the revolution many changes were made and immense progress achieved, so much so that today Iran is one of the leading countries in the field of health.

"Today, we have 67 departments of medical sciences, 850 research centers, and 25 departments of pharmacology. Our greatest resource is our human resources; we need to use their potential." He went on to add that since

immediately after the revolution, the enemies waged an all-out war against our country, adding, "As we witness that through war, inciting protest, and imposing sanctions, they are after damaging our revolution."

Einollahi proclaimed sanctions a source of inspiration for independence and self-reliance, adding, "Today, many countries want to have friendly relations with us."

The minister of health mentioned Iran's plans to form a health league, and added, "We had a fruitful session

with Zimbabwe officials, and had mutual negotiations with 10 countries in Geneva. Also, 20 countries now want our pharmaceutical products and medical equipment."

Iranians are ready to hold scientific seminars at a regional level, he further noted, adding that the Islamic Republic plans to export medicines and medical equipment.

Iran is producing 99 percent of medicines and 40 percent of medical equipment domestically, Einollahi said.

Our genomes are full of 'junk DNA'

Of the roughly three billion base pairs making up the human genome, only around two percent encodes proteins, leaving the remaining 98 percent with less obvious functions.

Dismissed by some as useless 'junk DNA', its origins, effects, and potential purpose in the evolution of life has attracted the attention of biologists ever since it

was first noticed cluttering up our chromosomes in the 1960s, Science Alert reported.

Now researchers from Tel Aviv University in Israel have added some vital insights into the reasons why non-coding DNA persists, which could help us better understand the rich variety of genome sizes across the living world.

In 1977, two scientists named Richard Roberts and Phil Sharp independently noticed a good portion of this DNA clutter wasn't just scattered between our genes, but often interrupted them mid-sequence, a discovery that later earned them a Nobel Prize.

Known as introns, they seemed to burden complex cells like ours, while leaving



simpler ones - such as those of bacteria - untouched. They also added a lot of la-

bor to the process of translating DNA into something material.



REUTERS

PIC OF THE DAY

Besiktas fans threw thousands of stuffed toys onto the pitch during Sunday's match against Antalyaspor to donate to children impacted by the earthquake in Turkey and neighboring Syria.

The Turkish Super Lig game, which ended 0-0, was paused after 4 minutes and 17 seconds to allow fans to throw the gifts onto the pitch. The earthquake first struck Turkey at 04:17 local time on Feb. 6.



American Museum of Natural History
@AMNH

Make way for the Sally Lightfoot crab! This agile crustacean can move quickly in any direction, making it hard to catch. On land, this species holds water in its shell, which it uses to moisten its gills. It can also spray that water at foes, shocking them with a sudden squirt.



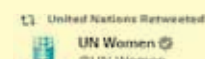
1:09 AM · Feb 27, 2023 · 12.7K Views



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Oceans are a source of life. They are crucial to the very fate of humanity. Supporting ocean sciences means allowing its understanding. Learn more about ocean exploration in the latest issue of @UNESCO Courier: on.unesco.org/3omQB4G #SaveOurOcean

8:30 AM · Feb 27, 2023 · 7,152 Views



The #Türkiye and #Syria earthquakes have cut access to basic services, with increased risk of gender-based or sexual violence. UN Women supports the immediate and longer-term response, including safe spaces and service provision points for women & girls.

3:31 AM · Feb 23, 2023 · 35.8K Views

